

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. A method for accepting a request, comprising:
 - mapping the request to a control tree factory;
 - generating a control tree from the factory based on the request wherein the control tree can include at least one control;
 - advancing the control tree through at least one lifecycle stage based on the request;
 - generating a response wherein the response can be used to render at least a portion of a graphical user interface (GUI); and
 - wherein the at least one control can represent a graphical element of the GUI.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of generating a control tree from the factory comprises:
 - creating a metadata representation of a control tree; and
 - constructing the control tree based on the metadata representation.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein:
 - the request one of: an hypertext transfer protocol request (HTTP), simple mail transfer protocol request, an instant messaging request, a request based on a standard protocol; and a request based on a proprietary protocol; and
 - the request originates from one of: a web browser, a instant messaging window, and a process.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - providing the response to a web browser.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein:
 - the control tree is driven through the at least one lifecycle stage by an interchangeable lifecycle component.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein:
 - the at least one control has an interchangeable persistence mechanism.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the at least one control can render itself according to a theme.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein:
one of the at least one controls can interact with another of the at least one controls.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein:
one of the at least one controls can advance through the at least one lifecycle stage in parallel with another of the at least one controls.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the lifecycle stage is one of: init, load state, create child controls, load, raise events, pre-render, render, save state, unload and dispose; and
wherein the lifecycle stage is part of a dynamically configurable lifecycle.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the response is one of: an hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) response, a simple mail transfer protocol response, an instant messaging response, a response based on a standard protocol, and a response based on a proprietary protocol.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein:
controls can raise events and respond to events.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the at least one control can be one of: Book, Page, Window, Menu, Layout, Portlet, Theme, Placeholder, Shell, LookAndFeel, Desktop, Body, Footer, Header, Head, Titlebar, ToggleButton, TreeView, TreeViewWithRadioButtons, TextBox, TextArea, Label, Button and Anchor.
14. A method for accepting an Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) request, comprising:

mapping the request to a control tree factory;
generating a control tree from the factory based on the request wherein the control tree can include at least one control;
advancing the control tree through at least one lifecycle stage based on the request;
generating a response wherein the response can be used to render at least a portion of a portal graphical user interface (GUI); and
wherein the at least one control can represent a graphical element of the GUI.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of generating a control tree from the factory comprises:
 - creating a metadata representation of a control tree; and
 - constructing the control tree based on the metadata representation.
16. The method of claim 14 wherein:
the request originates from a web browser.
17. The method of claim 14, further comprising:
providing the response to a web browser.
18. The method of claim 14 wherein:
the control tree is driven through the at least one lifecycle stage by an interchangeable lifecycle component.
19. The method of claim 14 wherein:
the at least one control has an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
20. The method of claim 14 wherein:
the at least one control can render itself according to a theme.
21. The method of claim 14 wherein:
one of the at least one controls can interact with another of the at least one controls.

22. The method of claim 14 wherein:
one of the at least one controls can advance through the at least one lifecycle stage in parallel with another of the at least one controls.

22. The method of claim 14 wherein:
the lifecycle stage is one of: init, load state, create child controls, load, raise events, pre-render, render, save state, unload and dispose; and
wherein the lifecycle stage is part of a dynamically configurable lifecycle.

24. The method of claim 14 wherein:
the response is one of: an hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) response, a simple mail transfer protocol response, an instant messaging response, a response based on a standard protocol, and a response based on a proprietary protocol.

25. The method of claim 14 wherein:
controls can raise events and respond to events.

26. The method of claim 14 wherein:
the at least one control can be one of: Book, Page, Window, Menu, Layout, Portlet, Theme, Placeholder, Shell, LookAndFeel, Desktop, Body, Footer, Header, Head, Titlebar, ToggleButton, TreeView, TreeViewWithRadioButtons, TextBox, TextArea, Label, Button and Anchor.

27. A machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon that when executed by a processor cause a system to:
map a request to a control tree factory;
generate a control tree from the factory based on the request wherein the control tree can include at least one control;
advance the control tree through at least one lifecycle stage based on the request;
generate a response wherein the response can be used to render at least a portion of a graphical user interface (GUI); and

wherein the at least one control can represent a graphical element of the GUI.

28. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein the step of generating a control tree from the factory comprises:

creating a metadata representation of a control tree; and
constructing the control tree based on the metadata representation.

29. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:

the request one of: an hypertext transfer protocol request (HTTP), simple mail transfer protocol request, an instant messaging request, a request based on a standard protocol; and a request based on a proprietary protocol; and

the request originates from one of: a web browser, a instant messaging window, and a process.

30. The machine readable medium of claim 27, further comprising:

providing the response to a web browser.

31. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:

the control tree is driven through the at least one lifecycle stage by an interchangeable lifecycle component.

32. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:

the at least one control has an interchangeable persistence mechanism.

33. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:

the at least one control can render itself according to a theme.

34. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:

one of the at least one controls can interact with another of the at least one controls.

35. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:

one of the at least one controls can advance through the at least one lifecycle stage in parallel with another of the at least one controls.

36. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:
the lifecycle stage is one of: init, load state, create child controls, load, raise events, pre-render, render, save state, unload and dispose; and
wherein the lifecycle stage is part of a dynamically configurable lifecycle.
37. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:
the response is one of: an hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) response, a simple mail transfer protocol response, an instant messaging response, a response based on a standard protocol, and a response based on a proprietary protocol.
38. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:
controls can raise events and respond to events.
39. The machine readable medium of claim 27 wherein:
the at least one control can be one of: Book, Page, Window, Menu, Layout, Portlet, Theme, Placeholder, Shell, LookAndFeel, Desktop, Body, Footer, Header, Head, Titlebar, ToggleButton, TreeView, TreeViewWithRadioButtons., TextBox, TextArea, Label, Button and Anchor.
40. A computer data signal embodied in a transmission medium, comprising:
a code segment including instructions to map a request to a control tree factory;
a code segment including instructions to generate a control tree from the factory based on the request wherein the control tree can include at least one control;
a code segment including instructions to advance the control tree through at least one lifecycle stage based on the request;
a code segment including instructions to generate a response wherein the response can be used to render at least a portion of a graphical user interface (GUI);
and

wherein the at least one control can represent a graphical element of the GUI.